

## **Minutes of the Personnel Committee**

**Tuesday, November 8, 2011**

Chair Paulson called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

**Present:** Supervisors Duane Paulson, Gilbert Yerke, Dan Draeger, Steve Wimmer, and Paul Decker. **Absent:** Pete Gundrum and Jim Heinrich.

**Also Present:** Chief of Staff Mark Mader, Human Resources Analyst Andrea Bellmann, Labor Relations Manager Jim Richter, Principal Human Resources Analyst Terri Sgarlata-Lutz, Employee Benefits Administrator Pete Hans, Senior Human Resources Analyst Renee Gage, Psychiatric Technician Kerry Schlei, and Social Workers Madeline Prange, Jennifer Adler, and Michael Reed. Representing Local 902 were Liz Krueger, Donna Ferguson, Michelle Montez, Julie Loose, Linda Senger, Tom Schneider, Kathe Blum, and Carla Rodriguez. Representing AFSCME Council 40 were Neil Rainford and Martha Merrill. Recorded by Mary Pedersen, County Board Office.

### **Public Comment**

Donna Ferguson, representing Local 902, thanked committee members for taking her phone calls.

### **Approve Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)**

MOTION: Wimmer moved, second by Draeger to approve the minutes of October 18, 2011. Motion carried 5-0.

### **Schedule Next Meeting Dates**

- December 13, 2011

### **Review and Approve Revisions to the Following Represented Classification Specifications: Telecommunicator, Certified Occupational Therapy Assistant, Community Health Educator, Psychiatric Technician, Public Health Nurse II, Public Health Technician, Registered Professional Nurse, Carpenter, Exposition Center Worker, Lead Exposition Center Worker, Golf Course Superintendent, Park Foreman, Park Maintenance Worker, Crew Leader, Patrol Worker, Sign and Signal Maintenance Worker, Correctional Officer**

Bellmann and Richter were present to discuss this item. Richter said some of these class specs have not been reviewed in years and others are more contemporary. Human Resources staff work with departmental supervisors on making the changes and bringing the class specs up-to-date. This is the first group of class specs and others will be brought forward for discussion and consideration at a future Personnel Committee meeting(s). Said changes are fairly routine or minor in nature and may reflect changes in job functions, knowledge of technology/computers, supervision of other employees, etc. No major concerns were raised.

MOTION: Decker moved, second by Wimmer to approve revisions to the above-listed represented classification specifications. Motion carried 5-0.

**Review and Approve Revisions to the Following Personnel Policies & Procedures: Dental Insurance; Health Insurance; Layoff, Recall, and Seniority; Pensions; Promotions, Demotions, and Transfers; Terminations**

Richter and Hans were present to discuss these changes which will go into effect January 1, 2012. Richter indicated that some have already been approved by the County Board. The discussion below highlights said changes and may not include every revision discussed.

**Dental Insurance:** Hans discussed changes pertaining to dependent eligibility, employee participation in premium cost sharing, and military leaves of absences. Regarding the latter, Hans said this practice has been in place for a while but needed to be added to the policy. Basically, an employee can take a military leave of absence for up to 24 months. Many years ago the County passed an ordinance that said for military leaves exclusively, the County will pay the full premium for the employee for an 18-month period, which was the maximum at that time. Later it was extended by federal law to 24 months. This additional six months is not covered by the County. Paulson asked that this issue be explored further to possibly extend County coverage for the final six months.

MOTION: Wimmer moved, second by Draeger to approve revisions to the dental insurance policies & procedures. Motion carried 5-0.

**Health Insurance:** Richter said these changes relate to eligibility, special enrollment, contributions toward premium costs, termination of employment, dependent eligibility, married couples employed by the County, and military leave. Beginning in 2012, two Choice Plus health insurance plans are being offered (Option 1 and Option 2). One has a higher benefit level and a higher premium. An HSA (Health Savings Account) plan was also offered as an option to employees. Protective service employees, in lieu of them not agreeing to contribute to their pension, will only have access to the HSA plan. Hans noted that significant changes were made pertaining to employee contributions toward premium costs which he explained in detail. Hans went on to discuss updates to dependent eligibility due to State and Federal changes including that a dependent child's eligibility ends on the date they turn age 26. However, for children incapable of self-support there is no age limit. A new policy for married couples employed by the County is being proposed. He said the old policy did make much sense whereby the senior employee would be the subscriber and the junior employee would be the dependent. The new proposal is more flexible and employees have the option of selecting one health insurance plan or they can choose single plans if there are no dependent children which will save the employees money. Hans said the military leave provision for dental insurance as discussed above is the same for health insurance. Hans said they are requesting to eliminate the provision providing for one month of paid health insurance for employees who exhaust their sick leave. This was a one-time benefit during an employee's term of employment and was adopted prior to passage of State and Federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA). The FMLA provides for a much better level of benefits for employees.

MOTION: Draeger moved, second by Decker to approve revisions to the health insurance policies & procedures. Motion carried 5-0.

**Layoff, Recall and Seniority:** Richter said changes to the existing policy are significant because collective bargaining provisions no longer exist as it relates to layoff, recall, and seniority. They are eliminating the concept of seniority and replacing it with the more general concept of length of

service, one factor that is considered when a department is facing a potential layoff/recall situation. With the exception of those covered under the WPPA, this is the same standard that has been in place for non-represented employees. Also, the definitions of layoff and termination have been clarified. An employee not working is considered laid off for six months. Anything beyond this timeframe is considered a termination. Richter spoke of other collective bargaining related provisions that have been deleted. Regarding replacement of employees in lower classifications, all sections referencing the bumping of other employees following a layoff have been deleted. Recall procedures have been modified and factors added include skills, abilities, attendance, disciplinary record, length of service, etc. Yerke referred the health insurance policy changes and said language was included indicating that those employees covered by the WPPA were not included. He asked if changes to this policy affect WPPA employees. Richter said no, they are covered by different provisions provided for in a contract. Some committee members felt the policy changes should specify whether or not they apply to those employees covered by WPPA contracts.

**MOTION:** Yerke moved, second by Decker to approve revisions to the layoff, recall and seniority policies & procedures specifying whether or not they apply to those employees covered by WPPA contracts. Motion carried 5-0.

**Pensions:** Hans said each of these revisions reflect recent State law changes for employees and employer including contributions, leaves of absence, eligibility, etc. In the past, employees with a minimum of 600 hours per year were eligible to participate in the pension plan. That threshold has increased to 1,200 hours for employees hired after July 1, 2011. Current employees are grandfathered. Both the County and employees must continue to make the required contributions during leaves of absence including military leave.

**MOTION:** Wimmer moved, second by Draeger to approve revisions to the pensions policies & procedures. Motion carried 5-0.

**Promotion, Demotion, and Transfer:** Richter advised that most of these revisions are due to the elimination of contractual obligations that were dealt with for job postings, seniority issues, etc. Richter said they are eliminating what was previously known as the 60-day trial period, utilized by some labor groups. This has caused problems for some departments over the years. Also, when a vacancy occurs departments will be able to choose whether they want to recruit for the position internally and/or externally. Richter discussed changes to the promotional sequence for the Clerk Typist I/II position. The seniority concept has been eliminated for evaluating employees for vacant positions. While length of service is a factor, so are work performance, skills and abilities, training, education, attendance, etc. Richter went on to discuss a change pertaining to temporary promotions.

**MOTION:** Draeger moved, second by Decker to approve revisions to the promotion, demotion, and transfer policies & procedures. Motion carried 5-0.

**Terminations:** Richter indicated these changes specify that employees are at-will and can be terminated at any time. The old language of "just cause" for employees covered under collective bargaining agreements has been eliminated (except for WPPA employees). This is the same standard for non-represented employees. Richter went on to discuss benefits upon termination including COBRA costs and holiday, sick leave, and vacation payouts.

MOTION: Wimmer moved, second by Decker to approve revisions to the terminations policies & procedures. Motion carried 5-0.

**Closed Session**

MOTION: Wimmer moved, second by Draeger to go into closed session at 2:18 p.m. in accordance with Section 19.85 (1)(e) Wis. Stats. for the purpose of discussing collective bargaining issues, and to approve the closed session minutes of previous meeting(s). Motion carried 5-0.

MOTION: Decker moved, second by Wimmer to return to open session at 3:24 p.m. Motion carried 5-0.

MOTION: Draeger moved, second by Decker to adjourn at 3:24 p.m. Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Gilbert W. Yerke  
Secretary